



**Governor's STEM Advisory Council
Regional STEM Network Hub**

Application

April 6, 2012

Southeast Region

**Camp Fire USA Iowana Council /
Camp Hitaga**

Name of proposed requesting entity (or entries as partners):

Camp Fire USA Iowana Council/Camp Hitaga

Name and title of primary contact:

Amy Geiger, Executive Director

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Region:

Southeast

Proposed Location:

The proposed Regional STEM Network Hub facility is Camp Hitaga. It is located at 5551 Hitaga Road, Walker, IA 52352. Camp Hitaga is owned and operated by Camp Fire USA Iowana Council. The camp sits on 160 acres of wooded hills, grassy meadows and forested land along the Wapsipinicon River. There are a total of 24 buildings that include 17 seasonal cabins, three winterized buildings, a nature cabin, large dining lodge, caretaker's home, pool with shower house, horse barn and stable area. The winterized buildings are used year-round and provide space for meetings, indoor programs, sleeping areas, restrooms and cooking facilities. Camp Hitaga has served approximately 2,000 people each year for the past few years. Programs are designed for youth of all ages. Activities include summer resident camp, day camp, seasonal programs, and outdoor and environmental education opportunities. Program activities include a 13-station challenge course, horseback riding, archery, canoeing, fishing, outdoor skills, drama, hiking, swimming, arts and crafts, digital photography, geocaching and a nature program designed around plants, animals, water, star gazing and weather.

Camp terrain includes hills, flat grassy open areas, meadows and several trails through the woods and along the hills that lead to and travel along the Wapsipinicon River.

The camp's close proximity to the Wapsipinicon River, Hitaga Sand Ridge Prairie Preserve, Pinicon Ridge State Park, Pleasant Lake State Park, Coe and Cornell Colleges and University of Iowa and Mount Mercy University provide a variety of locations from which to draw on expertise and to include in STEM educational opportunities.

Camp Hitaga has a very active outside group usage program hosting groups such as Horses of America, Hitaga Archery Club, Boy Scout and Girl Scout troops, 4-H Clubs, elementary and middle schools, area service organizations and college groups.

The proposed office location is the Camp Fire USA Iowana Council Service Center, located at 6300

Rockwell Drive NE, Cedar Rapids, IA 52402. Camp Fire rents office space in the American Red Cross building. Amenities available to Camp Fire include use of the conference room, training space, staff lounge, and parking space.

Identify Your Mission:

Camp Fire USA provides all-inclusive, coeducational programs in hundreds of communities across the United States. Founded in 1910, Camp Fire's outcome-based programs include youth leadership, self-reliance, after-school groups, child care, camping and environmental education. Camp Fire's mission - building caring, confident youth and future leaders - is evident in all programs and is the guiding principle for the outcomes for each program offered.

We believe Camp Fire's mission, purpose, program delivery system, program evaluation process, and opportunities available at Camp Hitaga will position us as a viable candidate to serve as the Southeast Regional STEM Hub Network. Our experience with outcome-based youth programming and quality program assessments serve as a catalyst for the work that will be required in exploring and developing program initiatives and measuring the goals and programs of the STEM expansion process. As a program-based organization, we have experience in developing delivery systems, action plans and collaborative working relationships within the corporate, volunteer and community organization environments.

Serving as a STEM Hub will help our local Camp Fire council continue to engage youth in experiences that help them learn to work within groups; make friends; build self-esteem; make good decisions; explore new ways of learning, interact with positive adult role models, and learn firsthand about ecology, conservation, and the interrelationships of all living things.

Identify Support:

Support provided by Camp Fire USA Iowa Council will include: work space, office furniture, computer system, access to internet, email account, and land-line telephone use. Our camp director would serve as the program coordinator for STEM Regional Hub activities held at Camp Hitaga. This would include scheduling, program development and delivery and evaluation.

Expenses charged by Camp Fire USA Iowa Council would include:

- 8 % Administration Fee on all revenue coming through the Camp Fire organization that is related to Regional STEM programming.
- Travel expenses related to STEM meetings, trainings and conferences.
- Facility usage and program fee for each program held at Camp Hitaga.
- Printing and postage associated with regional STEM program materials.

Participating Organizations:

Camp Fire has a 100-year history of providing services in eastern Iowa and Camp Hitaga is entering its 81 years of providing quality outdoor programming for youth. Through the years, many working relationships and connections have been established with those who either participated in, or support the mission of, Camp Fire. As the Regional STEM Network Hub, we would facilitate the formation of the Advisory Council. We would serve as the host for council meetings. Meetings could be held at the Red Cross building or at Camp Hitaga.

We envision the following organizations as viable participants in the Regional Advisory Council: Rockwell Collins – Two Rockwell Collins employees serve on the Camp Fire Board of Directors. Rockwell Collins provides financial assistance to Camp Hitaga and we are currently visiting with them about

partnering with Camp Fire in support of a summer technology academy. One of the largest employers in the area, Rockwell Collins has a vested interest in STEM programming and fostering an interest of such subjects among the youth in our communities.

Cedar Rapids Community School District (CRCSD) – The immediate past president of the CRCSD Board of Directors serves on the Camp Fire Board. Several community schools use Camp Hitaga for outdoor education programs. The Camp Fire executive director worked for the school district’s foundation and has established working relationships with administrators and school staff.

Metro Library Network – Current Camp Fire staff have a long-working relationship with the area public libraries. We recently partnered with them in promoting and hosting a Camp Fire youth outreach program.

Van Meter Industrial – Van Meter employee serves on the Camp Fire board and has a vested interest in creating more educational and leadership opportunities for youth in the area.

International Paper – Director of Human Resources serves on the Camp Fire board.

Other prospective members:

Kirkwood Community College

University of Iowa

Coe College

Cornell College

Mount Mercy University

Alliant Energy – Corporate funding partner of Camp Fire and has representation on the Camp Fire board.

Chamber of Commerce

Members of the Linn County Board of Supervisors

Cedar Rapids Science Station

Clipper Wind – Wind turbine factory

Funding Assistance:

Camp Fire USA Iowa Council would ask for funding consideration from the Governor’s STEM Advisory Council as it relates to expenses associated with the staffing of a STEM Hub Advocate. Supervisory assistance for this position would be provided by Camp Fire’s executive director. Expenses related to STEM programming at Camp Hitaga would be provided for by program fees/fee for service, grants and funding from prospective donors such as Rockwell Collins, Alliant Energy, International Paper, University of Iowa, Cargill, Van Meter Industrial and local Chambers of Commerce.

Additional Information:

Camp Hitaga offers a unique opportunity for program facilitation as it is within a two-hour driving radius from various school districts in four of the regional hubs. Accommodations provide for year-round day and overnight programming. All aspects of STEM programming could be incorporated into programs offered at Camp Hitaga.

Subject Matter Expertise:

Camp Hitaga’s camp director has a B.S. in General Science with a biological emphasis and concentrations in broad field, earth and space, and life sciences. He has over 20 years of experience in outdoor education for youth.

Camp Fire has a long standing relationship with Rockwell Collins. Access to expertise in the fields of engineering and math is available to us through several contacts and departments at Rockwell Collins.

Additional Considerations:

Camp Fire USA Iowa Council has been serving youth in the eastern Iowa since 1913. We have a long-standing tradition of providing quality programs that result in positive outcomes for youth. We are a nationally recognized youth organization and adhere to the core values of Camp Fire USA which provide guidance in establishing a positive learning environment for youth.

Camp Fire USA Core values

- We believe that children and youth are our most precious resources.
- We believe that in an approach to youth development that builds assets and empowers individuals.
- We believe that the best youth development occurs in small groups where children and youth are actively involved in creating their own learning.
- We are committed to coeducation, providing opportunities for boys, girls, and families to develop together.
- We provide caring, trained mentors to work with children and youth.
- We are inclusive, welcoming children, youth, and adults regardless of race, religion, socioeconomic status, disability, sexual orientation, or other aspects of diversity.
- We believe in the power of nature to awaken a child's senses, curiosity, and desire to learn.
- We foster leadership, engaging, children and youth to give service and make decisions in a democratic society.
- We provide safe, fun and nurturing environments for children and youth.
- We enrich parents' and other adults' lives by expanding their skills and encouraging them to share their talents and build relationships with children and youth.
- We respond to community needs with our programs and expertise.
- We advocate on behalf of children, youth, and families